158. Disabilities of the Travancore Pulayas.

Mr. Aiyan Kali (Member, Nominated) said that, though the Government had done much for the Pulayas in the wake of education, there were several difficulties in the way of their taking full advantage of the concessions granted to them. But for the unsympathetic treatment experienced by the Pulayas at the hand of Head Masters and Inspectors of Schools, there would have been better educational progress among the community.

He added that, if sufficient training was given to the members of the community in industrial matters, it would be productive of much good to the State. They should be given a scientific training in agriculture and other cottage industries. For that purpose the Member prayed that a number of scholarships should be granted to the Pulaya boys from the State.

In spite of the Government orders on the subject, the community experienced difficulties in getting access to public places. The officers of the Government were not rendering any assistance to them. The Member prayed that more sympathy might be shown to them in that direction.

Finally, the Member thanked the Government for the various acts of kindness done by them to better the condition of the Pulayas and other depressed classes.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

159. Suggestions for modifying the constitution of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

Mr. E. K. Velayudhan Pillai, B. A., B. L. (Member, Kartikappalli taluk) said that the Assembly had been in existence for over 12 years and had a brilliant record of useful work. Successive Dewans had complimented the Members on their public spirit and patriotism, their sobriety of thought and moderation of language. Thus, by the exercise of the privilege conferred on the Members in a spirit of fairness and moderation, the Assembly had entitled itself to a real participation in the administration of public affairs. Further, in the present year, the Assembly had arrived at a critical stage of its existence. The public interest manifested in the proceedings of the Assembly on the score of its novelty in the earlier years of its existence was fast disappearing, and in its place was gradually growing up in the public mind a serious doubt as to its practical utility. The Assembly was declared to be a highly costly substitute for the older method of presenting petitions to the Head of the Government for redress of grievances. There was another version that the Assembly was an expensive annual pageant got up for the amusement of the Trivandrum public, both official and non-official, and not a public body seriously intended for the deliberation of public questions. The Member's proposal for the revival of public confidence in the Assembly was simple and only involved the adoption of a few changes in the constitution and functions of the Assembly.

In the first place, the Member suggested that all the Heads of Departments should actively participate in the proceedings of the Assembly. They had hitherto been interested spectators and not actual players. The exchange of a few questions, under the immediate supervision of the President, between the Government officers responsible for the conduct of public affairs and the accredited representatives of the people, would, in the Member's opinion, be an innovation wholesome to all parties and one that was heartily wished for. The change would give an air of reality to the proceedings of the Assembly and would also considerably enhance its dignity.

The Member's second proposal aimed at a desirable increase in the number of opportunities for such exchange of views between the representatives of the Government and of the people. He proposed that the Assembly should meet twice in the year, the birth-day session in the month of Kanni being added to the present session. The Members once elected should be allowed to hold their seats for three years consecutively without re-election.

Dewan.—Do you think that the people will like it ?

Member.—Yes, Sir.

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